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## Behind the Word: Corned

Miss Helen W. Noyes at the Storrow House in Lincoln, Massachusetts, writes that she and some of her friends would like to know why the word *corned* means 'salted.' applies to beef but not to other kinds of flesh, like pork and fish. Well, first of all, many of our listeners might like to know how *corned* ever came to mean 'salted'.

In the eleventh edition of the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* (1910), under the entry *corn*, we read: 'The term "corned" is given to a preparation of meat (especially beef) on account of the original manner of preserving it by the use of salt in grains or "corns."'. And under the entry *beef* we read: "'Corned'" or "corn" beef is the flesh cured by salting, i.e. sprinkling with "corns" or granulated particles of salt.' So *corn* turns out to be 'a grain, for example, of salt'; and *corned* means 'salted.' Such a meaning is one that I myself have had to learn artificially. My first twenty years, spent on a Georgia farm, were concerned very much with velvet beans, peanuts, watermelons, cotton, and corn. The only way, then, in which *corn* meant 'salt' to me was the indirect one of the salty sweat of the brow incident to cultivating and harvesting not only corn, but also the other crops just mentioned. Note that so far I haven't mentioned the corns that appeared on our feet and hands while we labored at this cultivating and harvesting. As I became a little educated I learned to call these corns calluses, somewhat as I learned that it was more polite to "perspire" than to "sweat."

But to get back to those quotations that we had a moment ago from the *Britannica*, the word *corn* or *corned* was mentioned in the same breath with *grain* or *granulated*. As a matter of fact, *corn* and *grain* are very closely related — we say that they are cognate with each other; they have the same ancestor. *Grain* got into English from Old French, which had inherited the word from Latin where in ancient times it was *granum* (g-r-a-n-u-m), with the same root that we have in *granary*. *Corn* (c-o-r-n), on the other hand, has been in the Germanic tradition for a long time; it is almost identical, at least in sound, with the Modern German K-o-r-n; but more than that, it has a close cousin in the Gothic *Kaurn* (k-a-u-r-n), at least 1500 to 2000 years old. Well, the Germanic languages (including English, German, and Gothic) and the Italic languages (including Latin, Oscan and Umbrian, etc.), as well as several other languages, have descended from a prehistoric language called Primitive Indo-European. A g-sound at the be-

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DOROTHY M. DUNN

## MYTHOPOESIS: A SATIRE

A friend of mine who edits a small-town weekly paper in North Dakota turns this hand now and then to writing short stories. No man could have a more modest talent for the genre or be more modest about that talent. Now and then, though, he does publish a story in one of the Mid West farmers' journals. Whenever that happens, I am sure to receive a copy. All his tales are of a homey, uncomplicated realism suited to his readers. That at least is a fair description of his latest.

"Getting Rid of the Cat" is a good-natured yarn about a squabble between an average couple. The bone — more accurately, the bones of contention are covered by the sleek fur of a temperamental feline. Mr. and Mrs. Paul C. Fuss cannot agree about their pet. The wife, Evelyn, is devoted to the tabby; but the creature so annoys Paul that he dreams of and schemes for its riddance. Eventually Paul has his way. The tabby is evicted; a lovable cocker spaniel takes its place. Soon enough the puppy's charms captivate Evelyn, and domestic tranquillity is restored. When I wrote to the author that I found his piece entertaining and rather like a *Saturday Evening Post* cover put into words, he was pleased and encouraged.

Probably I would not have given the story a second thought if I had not suddenly been called upon to lead the May meeting of the Peaceful Augustans. At the university where I used to teach, this group of young English instructors and graduate students met once a month. The custom was that before every meeting, each member, on his own, would read the same piece of literature, preferably a work none had as yet encountered. He would then write a brief critique, which he read before his fellow Augustans. These readings were followed by discussions, generally led by a senior colleague. Through what motives I can hardly say now — possibly the pressure of blue books, or the desire to please my friends, or the feeling that a warm May evening would be more suitable for sociability than for intellectuality — I had "Getting Rid of the Cat" mimeographed; and from the copies distributed to the club members I took care to omit the names of the author and the journal.

I anticipated a pleasant, easy time with the Augustans. They were an excellent group. All of them had admirable undergraduate records from our best colleges and universities. And all of them had demonstrated praiseworthy erudition, assiduity, and sometimes even brilliance as fledgling academicians. But when they directed their concentrated fire upon my

friend's little story, I knew that the heat crawling under my collar had nothing to do with the May temperature. For I witnessed such a display of learning and critical perspicacity as to rock my professorial underpinnings from bottom to top. I was out of my class, and worrying if I had already become an incompetent old fogey.

It was the climactic incident of the story which detonated the liveliest discussion and brought forth the profoundest interpretations. Let me summarize. Routinely, the feline spent its nights in the Fusses's cellar. On this particular night its howls were disturbing the couple's sleep — especially Paul's. When the husband had had enough, he leaped from his bed and headed for the cellar. "Paul Christopher Fuss! Don't you dare do anything to that cat!" his wife cried after him. But Paul was boiling. To make matters worse, the lights went out as he started down the cellar steps. A fuse had blown. Then Paul could not find his flashlight and had to grope through the basement with only a lighted candle. In the obscurity he cursed when he stubbed his toe against a misplaced broom. He made it to the fuse-box, however; drew his hand over its top; and found a fresh fuse. In a minute or two the lights came on again. When he glanced at his grime-covered hand, Paul noticed a few black pellets adhering to it — compliments of the mice in residence. "Damned cat's not even a mouser," he muttered. And he lunged for the creature and threw it out the cellar door.

Without going into further details of the story, perhaps I can hint at the violence and the completeness of my boulevardism by setting down — with the permission of its author — the best and the most representative of the Augustans' critiques:

"Let us begin with the obvious, the hero's name. Its first and last letters, *p* and *l*, comprise *pl*, the astronomer's designation for the planet Pluto. Clearly, this name suggests the mythological Pluto. The suggestion is hardly misleading when we recognize that Paul-Pluto meets his trial and wins his victory in the cellar. Surely no one can doubt that the cellar symbolizes the nether-world. Yet Paul-Pluto is not merely the grim but just god of Hades. More fully, he is a figure representing the fusion of both the Greek and the Christian traditions. There is no mistaking his middle name. As Christopher or the Christ-bearer, Paul is also the bringer of light into the darkness of this world. The candle

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**THE LAMP OF EXPERIENCE**

If Coleridge is right that "the light which experience gives us is a lantern on the stern, which shines only on the waves behind us," then it may be that the best thing the English teacher can do is to stay in the classroom, preferably with the lights out. For if there's nothing to be gained by experience except hindsight, all the English teacher has to do is hold up last year's themes to the light to determine which way to go next year.

The fact of the matter is that experience outside the classroom is the best tonic there is for the run-down English teacher whose ideas are beginning to crack and whose lectures are getting flabby. For the blackboard-and-desk teacher many times suffers from academic insulation, cut off

from that area of society where communication is the main current of life: business and industry.

Now, I'm not suggesting that English teachers should periodically take off from classroom teaching and open businesses just for the experience. But I am saying that a summer tour of duty in industry observing the techniques of communication would probably serve the cause of education better than the taking of a dozen education courses or the reading of a dozen books on classroom methodology. One university pedagogue advising another academic shut-in may not be as bad as the blind, but this system all too often is both short-sighted and dimwitted.

At least as much as anyone else, and perhaps more so, the English teacher should guard against intensional orientation. For unless he himself participates in activities divorced from pedagogues, prodigies and professors — not to speak of books and blackboards — he's liable to find himself also divorced from reality.

Since communication is an extension of human personality and experience, the person who proposes to instruct others in the tender art of writing had better have something to say himself. For how an instructor with no opinions or no interests can pretend to be a teacher of men is beyond me.

One of the most reprehensible attitudes held by some teachers is the view that the stuff they learned ten or twenty years ago was good enough then and so it is good enough now: i.e., all you have to do is go to State U. for five or six years and you can soak up enough methodology to last you till your forced retirement at 65. The only trouble with this philosophy is that it ignores the most important force in education: the dynamics of the instructor himself. And unless the instructor also participates in non-academic activities, he won't even have a Coleridge lamp to look back to.

S. W. BROSSMAN  
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**BEHIND THE WORD**

(Continued from page 1)

ginning of a word in this prehistoric language remained a *g*-sound as it descended into Latin, Greek, Sanskrit, and some other languages; but always changed into a *k*-sound as it descended in a parallel line of development into the Germanic languages, including English. This principle accounts for the *k* versus *g* in such words as *kind* beside *genus*, *knee* beside *genuflection*, and *know* beside *recognize* (r-e-c-o-g-n-i-z-e). For the same reason we have *k* in *corn*, but *g* in *grain* and *granary*. (Now, *corn* meaning 'callus' is from Latin *cornu* (c-o-r-n-u), meaning 'horn', as in *cornet* and *cornucopia*; it does not concern us here.) In ancient Latin *granum* referred at first to a seed or small kernel, but later also to a particle of marble. According to the *Oxford English Dictionary*, *corn* was being used

to refer to a seed sometime before 700 and to a small, hard particle, as of sand or salt, by about 888.

But to get back to Miss Noyes's specific question, why *corned* applies to beef rather than pork, etc. — as a matter of fact, although, according to the *Oxford* we have in 1621-1651 "Beef — corned, young, of an Ox," still almost as early, in 1655, we find "If you eat it (pork) corned, yet is it of gross juice and speedy Corruption." The next quotation given by the *Oxford* and involving *corned* is dated 1856: "Slices of good wheat bread, and corned pork." And for 1858 we have Peter L. Simmonds' *A Dictionary of Trade Products* quoted as defining *Corned-meat* thus: "flesh slightly salted, intended for early use, and not for keeping for any time." Then, in 1881 we come back to *corned beef*. So *corned* used to be applied to pork as well as to beef.

Now sprinkling of salt on beef and thereby corning it may be sufficient for beef; but my experience on the farm was that merely sprinkling or pouring grains of salt upon pork is not adequate for preserving pork in a warm climate. In Georgia we had to rub the salt on, *hard*; and even then much of our pork spoiled. There seems to be a common practice in some parts of the country of keeping pork in brine, which is salt dissolved in water — a very strong solution is normally used; so we have the term "pork barrel." Indeed, salt has become so associated with pork that we usually say "salt pork" now, rather than "corned pork." We have a similar situation, however, with fish — at least some kinds of fish.

BEHIND THE WORD is a reprint of a talk made over WBZ, Boston, as a feature of Bob Nelson's PROGRAM PM. — Ed.

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**MYTHOPOESIS**

(Continued from page 1)

he must use in his nocturnal journey marks a preference for the natural over the mechanical. That is, both the flashlight (which cannot be found) and the candle are phallic symbols. The latter, as a more primitive lighting device and not so much a product of modern technology, is thus closer to nature.

"When Paul descends into the cellar he is, in effect, doing several things. On the uninteresting level of commonsense fact, he goes to replace a burnt-out fuse. Psychologically, his is a return to the pristine darkness of the womb. Here it is noteworthy that he stubs his toe. On a deeper level Paul suffers not merely a hurt toe. Note that his surname is *Fuss*, which in German is of course *foot*. Thus Paul injures his name — or his honor. The integrity of his spirit is jeopardized. Symbolically his psyche undergoes a trauma. Since we know from Freud's *Traumdeutung* how, in the unconscious, one part of the body may come to represent another — an image becoming displaced and yet carrying with it its original and powerful cathectic — Pluto-Paul's wound is unquestionably a symbolic castration. We find ample confirmation for this view when we reflect that in vernacular English Paul's last name has synonymic relations with fussiness and other compulsive symptoms not unconnected to anxiety.

"On the level of myth, Paul is an archetypal hero. His going into the cellar is a disappearance into darkness — more largely, a descent into the earth. From there he emerges, like a primitive vegetation god, bringing back light. Light and darkness of course comprise the chief symbolic pattern throughout the narrative. In generic terms we have here a quasi-allegory of how light overcomes darkness and/or how life wins a victory over death and good conquers evil.

"Besides whatever aesthetic functions one may assign to the creature, the comprehensive significance of the cat goes far to support this interpretation. Here one might reach back to ancient Egypt — or only to Hecate and then to medieval lore concerning witches, brooms, black cats, etc. Let us admit at once and frankly that in the story proper the cat is described as a "tabby." This fact is negligible, however, when we remind ourselves that in the dark all cats are black. The cat, then, symbolizes evil. Thus its ejection from the cellar by Paul — its ostracism from Hades by Pluto — is the objective correlative of the triumph over evil.

"Criticism should be wary, however, of oversimplifying Paul's course of action. The emotions the cat stirs in him — and these are indubitably bound to his feelings toward his wife — signalize the moral struggle going on within the hero. Indeed that struggle, viewed ethically, is the architectonic matrix of the narrative as an entity.

"As to Mrs. Fuss, the whole texture and tension of the story make her, palpably, a figure rich in ambiguities. Aside from whatever problems her name might bring to the etymologist, its first syllable calls to mind Eve. For Evelyn Fuss is the type of primordial woman. To the Hebrews of old she might have been identified with life; and to the ancient Celts she might have signified what is pleasant. Yet her conflict with her husband reveals not only her own moral and emotional perplexity but also the hero's ambivalence toward her. As the female principle, Evelyn-Eve is both life-giving and death-threatening. Her dark, witch-like aspect is epitomized in her blind devotion to her night-howlng cat. With the banishment of the cat, through the agency of the savior-husband, her nature is purified of its evil and her emotional health is restored. When she turns her affections to the spaniel — by tradition the spaniel being an emblem of fidelity — her salvation through faith is assured.

"That in its deeper metaphysical meanings and in its larger mythopoetic significance 'Getting Rid of the Cat' is a symbolic treatment of the Christian drama of redemption seems undeniable even in the tiny but momentous detail of the dirt which soils Paul's hand when he rubs it over the fuse-box. Here the sacred and the profane are juxtaposed with perfect art and theological aptness. For these black pellets are, in blunt Anglo-Saxon terminology, mouse turds. By a short, easy, psychoanalytic step through the punning unconscious they become, as it were, mustards. And in the Christian story, is not the kingdom of heaven likened to a grain of mustard seed?"

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## Code vs. Vocabulary

An electrical communication system like the telephone has for two of its purposes the transmission of music and oral messages over long distances. It achieves by mechanical means an approximation of the sounds that are introduced into the apparatus, and it performs its act in the same sequence as does a human speaker. The procedures are analogous, so that a synoptic view of a telephone system can serve as a symbolic model for analyzing the successive steps in the emission and reception of speech. The code will be our chief point of interest.

The elements in a telephone system are (1) a power source; (2) a transmitter that converts sounds into electrical impulses, that is, into coded signals; (3) a channel to carry these signals; and (4) a receiver to reconstitute these signals into the original sounds. Noise intrudes into the telephone system at each point: there is power noise, transmitter noise, line or channel noise, and receiver noise. The clarity and intelligibility of any telephone transmission depends upon something other than the sounds put into the transmitter.

An examination of human speech requires an enlargement of the model, for there are different power sources for the transmitter and the receiver. The power source for the channel, nature, is also a power source for the providers of power to the transmitter and receiver. At once it becomes apparent that the transmitter and the receiver as human beings are mediate power sources and also encoders. The concept of the transmitter, consequently, must be narrowed in the speech process to the speech tract, and the power source must be considered the human body and

especially the central nervous system or mind, which is the originator of the impulses that lead to the desire to speak.

Since no one knows what constitutes mind, it may be best to indicate the sequence of operations. A human being is activated to give oral expression to an idea (whatever that may be). The speech centers in the brain produce the power impulses to set the memory of stored language experience to work. Like a high-speed computer the brain and nerve lines engage in the necessary job of setting in motion the muscles of the speech tract. Similar but different activities include eating, walking, dressing, sleeping, and elimination. The marvelous quality of the brain is that it can direct a number of activities simultaneously.

Just as the telephone transmitter encodes the sounds given to it, so the speech tract encodes the idea. If the idea is "Do you speak English?", the code may lead to "Sprechen Sie Englisch?", "Habla usted inglés?", "Parlez-vous anglais?", "Parla inglese?", or a similar expression in any one of the other 2,793 identified languages. The great point of similarity between the telephone transmitter and the human speech tract is that each one can handle all human sounds. The great difference is that the speech tract of the ordinary human being handles the sounds found in one or two or possibly three codes. Of course, there are people who are proficient in as many as thirty codes.

The code employed by any speaker is a result of several causes. He knows and uses the code which was handed to him at birth by his environment. His native language was an inheritance; he never had a chance to choose it as he can choose to learn other codes. Yet because habit has led to the use of the limited code of one language, he may find it difficult to achieve the same proficiency in others. The particular sounds in his code are the result of the cumulation of experience in his speech community. A New Englander speaks differently from a Southerner because of his associates; yet both use the general code of American English.

A language code is necessarily built on a small closed set of distinctive, meaningless, voluntarily produced, non-instinctive, symbolic sounds. In English there are 33 segmental phonemes (21 consonants, 9 vowels, and 3 semivowels) and 12 suprasegmental phonemes (4 levels of pitch, 4 degrees of stress or accent, and 4 lengths of pause or juncture). These sounds unite into morphemes or meaning units, and the meaning units are joined into systematic arrangements of syntax. These three levels of sound production must be viewed in the proper way to understand the nature of a language code.

The primary segmental sounds have a parallel in written alphabetic letters. Of themselves they are nothing but a coherent, homogeneous, organized set of instruments. They exist in sound (and shape) as

a set of pattern contrasts, so that each one is distinctive, recognizable in isolation or in combination, and manipulable, as is the initial consonant in *bit*, *ban*, *bond*, *bun*, *bent*. Mathematically these sounds (and letters) work by the principle of permutation.

Theoretically in any language all sounds can unite in any sequence; practically, however, no language permits many combinations. The principle of conservatism marks every aspect of the language code, so that the number of morphemes is small by comparison with the extent of the vocabulary. The redundancy in English has been estimated at 50% by C. E. Shannon; that is, the same sounds and sound groups recur so often that losses in transmission can be supplied without difficulty by the receiving person.

Morphemes may be units of the message and units of the code. In the preceding sentence the final *s* in the plural nouns and *may*, *of*, *and*, *of*, and *the* are units in the code; the other words or word elements are units in the message. As soon as it is seen that morphemes belonging to syntax and morphemes belonging to the code must be distinguished, the limited nature of the code-morphemes becomes apparent. The fallacy in Noam Chomsky's *Syntactic Structures* (1957) arises from his failure to discover this distinction; as a consequence he asserts that "the 'reality' of language is too complex to be described completely" (p. 17) and that "A language is an enormously involved system" (p. 18). The redundancy in morphemes is largely in the code signals; they parallel the letter and structure-word frequencies in alphabetic transmission. The fact is that a language must be a simple system at all operating points or children could not manipulate it.

The syntactical arrangements of a lan-

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guage make possible its message-carrying activities. At this point in particular a language code differs from the telephonic code of electric impulses, a Morse code, or an alphabet, so that the narrow meaning of code as used in some situations must not be used in relation to a whole language code. Again it is important to see that simplicity marks the allowable arrangements in any language. There are 10 basic sentence patterns, 10 word groups, 10 kinds of modification, 5 word classes, 5 kinds of substitution (including pronouns and metaphors), and 5 kinds of inflection (including ablaut, umlaut, and affixes). This total parallels the 45 basic units in English. To these for speech may be added 10 intonational patterns.

This is not the place to display the entire syntax of English. Yet as soon as mathematical principles are brought to bear upon a language, it will be seen that the four major word classes operate so as to give rise to four functions (see my "The Mathematics of the Sentence," *The CEA Critic*, September, 1959). By the theory of functionality all word groups can fill these four functions. The word groups are well-ordered, i.e., fixed in sequence, and the necessary functions in a sentence move about by the principle of permutation to create inverted and transposed order; a specific combination of VN or VNN gives rise to the question or a command sentence pattern. Chains of modifiers unite in sequences on the principle of connexity; that is, a sequence of pre-modifying adjectives or postmodifying phrases and clauses is held together as is a connex in mathematics. The same principles which are seen in phonemics and morphemics apply to syntax.

The code of distinctive phonemes, distinctive morphemes, and distinctive syn-

tactical arrangements constitutes the anatomy of the language system. The life in the system comes from other sources than the language itself. The noises that intrude into the system come from various sources. The deeds performed by the language system, though limited by the system, are innumerable, unanticipatable, and boundless in range, even as are the deeds of a human being. The rules of the system for phonology, morphology, prosody, and syntax lie within the system itself. Only incidentally is the work of the system a criterion of the system itself.

The ideal of a language code as of a telephone code is communicability, the capacity to transmit economically, efficiently, and promptly that which is given to and fits the transmitter. Inbuilt in such a system, therefore, is a logic of the system; any other logic must be achieved by adaptation, as is done in music by the symbolic model of the staff or in chemistry by the benzene ring. There can be no assurance that a communication system can guarantee the truth, meaningfulness, intelligibility, or beauty of the messages transmitted by the system, as may be seen in Lewis Carroll's "Jabberwocky."

The marvelous quality of language lies in its capacity to transmit endless messages and to lend itself to aesthetic ends. So accustomed is the public to thinking of the message as language that the message-bearing units — the vocabulary — have had priority in linguistic analysis since the dawn of recorded history. The millions of words that have been created in English are like the cents that have been coined in the mint. They work in and out of every kind of business transaction without ever having any real power of their own to affect the procedures. Their value lies in their immediate service and their membership in the system. Whether they purchase bread or diamonds or atom bombs depends upon circumstances; what is certain is that they work in limited ways within the framework of a monetary system.

The language system needs vocabulary for message units just as a man needs work to do and ideas to transmit. But physiologically a man is not his work or his ideas, and so a language is not its work or its messages. A language is a code that is comprised of a small number of distinctive phonemes that work in contrastive sets, of a small number of morphemes of structure, and a small number of operating or syntactical arrangements and their over-all rhythms and tunes. When this view of language is grasped, the communication system rather than the vocabulary will be studied, and the vocabulary will take its proper and important, yet secondary, place in the discussions of language, literature, logic, and philosophy. Grammar will rise to take its position as the basic natural science in the curriculum.

HARRY R. WARFEL  
University of Florida

## Literature and poetry on the American scene

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## The Still Vext Research Paper

Given the orbiting power of a Discoverer and the X-ray vision of Superman, one might find out about the research paper<sup>1</sup> in schools and colleges. Afoot with a questionnaire rather than a vision, one might still unearth some facts and profound a statement from their drift and purport. With those possibilities in mind, the School and College Liaison Committee<sup>2</sup> of the New England Association of Teachers of English sent three questions to 130 degree-granting institutions in New England<sup>3</sup>. The questions follow.

1. Does your department teach the writing of the research paper as an integral part of an English course required of all students?

Yes — No —

2. Does your department find that your students come to you adequately prepared to write research papers in college?

Yes — No —

3. Does your department feel that the whole matter of the research paper might well be dropped from the college-preparatory curriculum?

Yes — No —

One hundred and twelve usable questionnaires came back (86%). In substance, the answers added up as follows:

1. Ninety institutions teach the writing of the research paper as an integral part of an English course required of all students. Twenty-two do not.

<sup>1</sup> Read term paper, library paper, or the like phrase; it seems fruitless to try to arrive at distinctions among these.

<sup>2</sup> The opinions expressed in this paper may tally with those of others in the Committee, but I alone am responsible for them.

<sup>3</sup> One hundred and thirty constitutes almost all of the degree-granting institutions in the six states.

2. Ninety-nine English departments do not find that their students come to them adequately prepared to write research papers in college. Seven departments are on the other side, and six are undecided.

3. Seventy-two departments feel that the teaching of the research paper should be continued in the secondary school, college-preparatory curriculum. Thirty-six feel that it should be dropped; four are undecided.

Without assuming that the eighty-six percent heard from represent the silent fourteen percent, we may conclude:

Eighty percent of 112 colleges and institutions of New England teach and require research papers from their students. Eighty-nine percent of these institutions feel that not enough is done regarding the research paper in secondary schools. Yet only thirty-two percent want the research paper dropped from the secondary-school.

Hypothesations are in order. College English teachers (CET) have faith: that any something is better than a *tabula rasa*. CET have hope: that what has not yet happened will somehow happen. CET have love: for the student of the research paper who knows only that you can't go wrong if you get it from an encyclopedia.

I do not share their faith, their hope, their love.

I do, however, take an interest in where these virtues evidence themselves. To find out, I divided the returned questionnaires into five kinds, by institutions: "Old" (I chose it as an innocuous term). By it I mean Harvard, Yale, Amherst, *et alii*. The other categories need no definitions.

From the "Old" there were fifteen questionnaires returned. Applying ourselves again to the three questions, we find that two-thirds of these institutions do not teach the research paper in a course required of all students; that one-fifth find their incoming students adequately prepared in the research paper; that three-fifths do not so find them; and that one-fifth are of two minds on the matter. Only one-third of the "Old" institutions would have the teaching of the research paper cut from the college-preparatory curriculum.<sup>4</sup>

The "Old" institutions may stake their faith on the wheels of their admissions machinery, which grind exceeding fine. Their hope, though not shown to be excessive, may grow from soil that some of us would regard as rich and well-Harrowed. And their love may not have to be, after all, pure charity.

Most of the other groups ("State", "Teachers' Colleges", "Junior Colleges", "Others") sort out along the above lines, with two interesting exceptions. The twenty-two teachers' colleges almost unanimously agree that their students are not prepared to do research papers. Perhaps because of that, virtually half of these colleges answered Question Three with "Yes".

<sup>4</sup> On this percentage the "Old" and the Junior Colleges are as one; may it comfort both.

This want of faith, hope, and love is amplified in the fifty-three "Other" institutions: close to sixty percent would have the secondary school drop the research paper. "We love the things we love for what they are," says Robert Frost; but there may be a time to stop loving.

So much for numbers. What about their "drift and purport"? I take them to be these:

- Teaching the matter of the research paper is a practice in more than a majority of the degree-granting institutions of New England.
- There is a widespread disgruntlement — on both sides of the academic road and the classroom desk — concerning the research paper.
- Yet only a minority of college teachers of English are willing to begin *de novo* in teaching the research paper.

We teachers of English in degree-granting institutions are almost obligated to be unhappy about the preparation of our students; it "comes with the territory." Accordingly, we sugar the birthright with faith, hope, and love, and we pray for martyrdom. But let us "dream other dreams, and better." Let us dream of a consistency among our institutions that will make it possible for all secondary school teachers of English to save the sweat and spirit now expended on the research paper. Leaving unvoiced the dream of better preparation in other matters, growing out of the excision of the research paper from the secondary-school curriculum, let us dream of a day when our students will come before us pristine and unprejudiced against the research paper. Un-teaching nothing, we shall initiate them into the research paper.

ARTHUR R. WILLIAMS  
University of Massachusetts

### SINCLAIR LEWIS

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by

Mark Schorer

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An excellent account of Sinclair Lewis's life. The approach is not literary or critical; it treats Lewis's books and other writings as events in his life, and events that helped to form his character. The book does attempt to locate Lewis in the American literary scene, contrasting and comparing him with his contemporaries — writers he actually knew and who naturally fit into the framework of a Lewis biography. "One of the outstanding biographies of our time."

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Walton R. Patrick, Auburn University

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**CEA ANNUAL MEETING**

Mark your calendars now for the annual meetings of the CEA in Chicago, Palmer House, December 27-28, 1961.

**Public Meeting:** Cultural Influences on the Teaching of English: Some Crucial Issues. Seymour Betsky (Montana State Univ.), Chairman; Albert Markwardt (Univ. of Michigan), Robert Gorham Davis (Columbia Univ.), and Marvin Mudrick (Univ. of California at Santa Barbara), Panelists.

**Dinner Meeting.** William Van O'Connor (Univ. of California at Davis), Speaker. Dec. 28.

**CEA Booth** will be #1 on the Exhibit Floor.

**Letters to the Editor**

Sir:

I have read Bruce Dearing's paper, "Experiment or Perish?" in *The CEA Critic* (April 1961) with interest and pleasure. He nails the situation squarely — and much more succinctly than I have been able to do. Yet I suspect that the sad future we both foresee for English will come to pass, and the Department will become a little coterie of self-satisfied and defensive conformists, still grouping together to prune any sprout of creativity or relevance to current life that tries to grow. The English department is too large an area of smug agreement to engage in self-appraisal until it has become too small and uninfluential for anyone to care what it does.

DONALD LLOYD

Wayne State University

Sir:

I want belatedly to congratulate you on the three-fisted editorial Donald Lloyd did for *The CEA Critic* (March 1961).

I attended the English meeting of the Genesee Valley Study Council and heard Dr. Lloyd both in his general lecture and in his group appearance. You will be interested to learn that out of that appearance came requests from secondary English teachers in this region for a linguistics course. Consequently, I gave one in evening extension this semester (enrollment 23). I have been giving the regular session course in linguistics and have all along spent the greater part of the semester's work on the structural approach. I have also offered a summer workshop in which we spent the whole time seeing how structural linguistics could be applied to language arts/English teaching, grades 4-12. We took aspects of language teaching and showed how structural linguistics could be applied on each of the various levels. In August, I was, still as a consequence, a consultant for three school systems seeking to make the structural approach part of their English curriculum. I say all this only to show that there is all kind of ferment in the right direction going on all over.

Finally, you will be much more interested to learn that Henry Lee Smith, Robert A. Hall, Clarence Barnhart, Herbert Hackett and Sumner Ives comprise a lin-

guistics committee developing a program to be presented to our State Education Department (with whom we have set up a strong cooperative relationship) for the schools of the state.

HANS GOTTSCHALK, EXECUTIVE SECRETARY  
*The New York State English Council*

**Humanities Center Session**

New directions for the *Humanities Center for Liberal Education in an Industrial Society* were charted at sessions held October 13-15 at the University of Massachusetts and at Fathoms High, the estate of Mrs. Charlotte Browne-Mayers, a Director of the Center and of the Office of Adult Education, Standard Oil Company (NJ). Veterans of CEA will recall that the Center grew out of the pioneer efforts of CEA in holding institutes with business and industry.

While the Center is now a separate entity, the English profession still exercises its concern for broad cultural responsibility through individual members. Present at the planning sessions were Max Goldberg, former Executive Director of CEA; Bruce Dearing, Harry Warfel, and Donald Lloyd, all past presidents of CEA; and Donald Sears, Editor of *The CEA Critic*. An era of increased activity for the Center will start with a cooperative seminar next summer planned with the Centennial Celebration committee of the University of Massachusetts.

**NOMINATIONS**

The CEA Committee on Nominations for office in 1962 has named the following:

**President**

John Ball, Lecturer and Consultant, Michigan State University. Chairman, I.C.A. Seminars on Communication (MSU).

**Second Vice-President**

Elisabeth Schneider, Professor of English, Temple University

**Members of the Board of Directors (3 of 5)**

Henry H. Adams, Department of English, U.S. Naval Academy

James T. Barrs, Department of English, Northeastern University

Hoyt E. Bowen, Department of English, Pfeiffer College

Albert Howard Carter, Professor of English, Florida Presbyterian College

Patrick G. Hogan, Jr., Department of English, Mississippi State University

**Nominating Committee**

Lt. Col. Cortland P. Auser, Air Force Academy

Hilda Fife, Department of English, University of Maine

Harry T. Moore, Research Professor, University of Southern Illinois

The present Second Vice-President, Charles M. Clark, automatically becomes First Vice-President.

Respectfully submitted,  
Donald Lloyd  
Ed Hirschberg  
Richard Bowman

There is a provision that extra names may be added to the ballot for Directors and Nominating Committee members by petition signed by ten members. Such petition should be sent to the Tampa Office of the CEA within the next two weeks if the names are to appear on the printed ballot.

A short biography of each of the nominees will appear in the November CRITIC.

**MODERN ENGLISH AND ITS HERITAGE***Second Edition*

by Margaret Bryant, Brooklyn College

The new edition of this text stresses the growing, dynamic character of modern English, while examining its origins and development. The "Word Formation" section now precedes "Grammar and Usage," for the convenience of instructors who prefer to teach the latter in a separate course. New features include a consonant chart, dialect maps, and a chart of Indo-European languages in present-day Europe.

March, 1962

**TWELVE AMERICAN WRITERS**

By William M. Gibson, New York University, and George Arms, University of New Mexico

This new text contains the best shorter pieces of Poe, Emerson, Thoreau, Melville, Hawthorne, Whitman, Twain, Frost, James, Eliot, Dickinson, and Faulkner. Each imaginative work is followed by a "recognition" section — criticism of the author's work by other writers. Much hitherto unpublished material from journals, letters, and collections of criticism appears for the first time in this unique volume.

March, 1962

**CHIEF MODERN POETS OF ENGLAND AND AMERICA**

Edited by Gerald D. Sanders, Eastern Michigan University; John Herbert Nelson, University of Kansas; and M. L. Rosenthal, New York University

This anthology of great twentieth-century poets will be available in three versions. A combined hardcover edition offers the works of fifty-one British and American poets, while two paperbound volumes contain respectively the works of twenty-four British and twenty-seven American poets. This book is distinguished by its thorough coverage of a select list of poets who, from the perspective of the current decade, appear especially significant.

March, 1962

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**NOTICES OF NOTE**

Eighteen months ago the University of Minnesota Press began publication of Pamphlets on American Writers ( $5\frac{1}{2} \times 8'$ , 44-48pp., 65¢). The editors — William Van O'Connor, Allen Tate, Robert Penn Warren — had discovered the demand of readers and students everywhere for sound short introductions to those American writers who might deserve "a place among the world's important writers." Now that the eleventh pamphlet has appeared, fourteen more on "American writers of all periods" await publication.

The Minnesota series has had the good reception of its older counterpart for English writers, the *British Book News Supplements*, *Writers and Their Work*. Because it is more closely and deeply critical than the English series, however, and lists both bibliographies and critical and biographical studies of its writers, the American series serves better the "serious students" for whom it is intended. Both series include a great, but not disproportionate, number of twentieth-century writers — fifty in the long English list, eighteen Americans. Neither series offers the thorough, original criticism of modern writers that appears in two, more expensive English series: the recent Evergreen Pilot Books and the Bowes and Bowes Studies in Modern European Literature and Thought.

To undergraduates, the Minnesota pamphlets bring the frequent thoughts that rarely get well expressed in lectures and that probably never enter student notebooks. Each pamphlet gives a college reader a strong grasp of themes and intentions so that he can get started in his own management of them. Since the pamphlets — especially those on novelists — are chiefly synthetical, seldom analytical, the student should be warned from depending upon them for papers or for examinations. The series can heighten class discussions because it traces influences and points often to the "democratic paradox" of self and society as a major theme in American writers' work. Emphasis falls, naturally, on the self of each writer; but judgments remain that can be set for essays, such

**Bard Thou Never Wert**

*By Richard Nickson  
Paterson State College*

He has designs on Fulbright,  
Our good gray-flanneled poet:  
Fain would he lie with the Muses  
And let the world know it.

*O, weep for Adonais!*

"To be or not to be,"  
He says, "is not the question:  
I think, therefore I think I am  
Deserving of attention."

*O, weep for Adonais!  
He is dead.*

"Beauty is certainly Truth —  
But will it sell?  
Truth is assuredly Beauty.  
If it is marketable."

*O, weep for Adonais!  
He is dead.  
And the poetry of earth  
Is never read.*

as Leon Edel's first sentence: "Henry James was the 'largest' literary figure to come out of America during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries." In general, the pamphlets on fiction and drama seem limited to use in survey courses. More difficult, the pamphlets on Frost, Eliot, and Stevens might better suit veteran students and advanced classes. Leading qualities of clarity and readability show, nevertheless, that the pamphlets' authors have taken the editors' challenge to interest world, not merely college, readers. —JGK

\* \* \*

From Purdue University, already a center for twentieth century studies (*MFS*, *EFT*), has issued *Poet and Critic: A Folder of Poetry and Criticism* (1961, \$1; 1962, \$2). William Tillson, with the advice of Chairman Barriss Mills and of Felix Stefanile, has sorted File #1 of neatly mimeographed poems and poem criticisms. Each poem gets its key of file number, date, poet, and page so that critics' comments (or letters) in later folders can be filed after the poetic text. Since *Poet and Critic* transmits every poem unbound, a reader who is undismayed by successive folders can gather a poet's production and its following criticisms. Here new and neglected poets will get poems read, collected, criticized; and critics, and recognized poets, can present their expectations and standards for verse. Annually, *Poet and Critic* will send out a *Registry* (\$1) of writers at verse. By its several continuities, year by year this magazine can improve poetic communication. Now *P & C* files will most please and instruct poetic workshops and undergraduate classes in creative writing and poetic analysis. Should poets and critics like Alan Swallow keep adding to the files, *Poet and Critic* will be a record not of therapeutic exercises, but of mid-century poetic beginnings and critical conventions. —JGK

\* \* \*

The annual labor mart of the MLA has approaches. But do you know about the CEA Bureau of Appointments which operates all year round? Registration is \$2.00.

## THE CEA CRITIC

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